

**DELAWARE COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 27, 2007**

Members Present: Morris, Ennis, Carroll, Endres, Harden, Kitson, Lank, Lardizzone, Spitzfaden, Thompson, Wasson and Webb

Members Excused: Magner, Newstadt and Timberman

Staff Present: Davila and Dennis

Guests: Richard Citron (VA Medical Center Director), Burton Barr (NARFE), Al Carter (SOS), Ron Sarg (MOAA), Bill McMullen (AF Sergeants Association), Ed Moczulski (LP Lo-DEL) and Carol Johnson

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to our Nations Flag.

Vice-Chairman Ennis opened the meeting by reporting that Chairman Morris was attending another meeting and would arrive shortly.

Mr. Citron briefed the Commission about the future developments and plans for the outpatient clinic in Dover and answered questions. He also reported on new developments with the Seaford and Millsboro clinics and discussed possible alternatives. He announced that the Wilmington VA Call Center will be replaced with a National Call Center and answered questions. Mr. Citron reported on a protest that was staged outside of the Wilmington VA Hospital on March 15, 2007. He discussed the new budget and improvements that are being planned. He indicated that the Wilmington VA would be receiving some extra money as a result of what happened at the Walter Reed Medical Center. There is a Veterans Service Officer meeting scheduled for April 3, 2007. He also discussed future inspections of the Delaware Veterans Home and discussion followed.

Mr. McMullen reported that the AF Sergeants Association will be having their Regional Convention at the Dover Sheraton from April 27-29, 2007.

Mr. Barr reported that NARFE will be patrolling Legislative Hall concerning veterans legislation.

Ms. Johnson discussed issues pertaining to homeless veterans and discussion followed.

There was discussion about volunteer programs at the Veterans Home.

Mr. Dennis discussed the Veterans Home progress.

**MOTION BY HARDEN TO ACCEPT FEBRUARY COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES,
SECONDED BY SPITZFADEN, MOTION CARRIED.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

CEMETERY COMMITTEE

No report.

COMMEMORATIVE AFFAIRS

No report.

FINANCE AND LOGISTICS

No report.

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

Commissioner Carroll discussed the issue of having a plaque with the Military Order of the Purple Heart emblem displayed in the new Veterans Home. Mr. Davila indicated that he and Mr. Reid have already discussed this issue and that the Commission needs to decide on the guidelines and parameters of having organizational plaques displayed.

MOTION BY MORRIS TO ALLOW THE VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS TO DONATE BRONZE ORGANIZATIONAL SEALS TO THE VETERANS HOME, SECONDED BY CARROLL, MOTION CARRIED.

Commissioner Lank questioned if any veterans have been turned down for residency to the Veterans Home and Mr. Dennis indicated that there have been some applications denied. There was discussion about why they had been denied and possible future situations that need to be considered and how they should be managed.

MOTION BY LARDIZZONE TO IMPLEMENT A WAITING PERIOD OF 18 MONTHS FROM THE OPENING OF THE VETERANS HOME BEFORE CONSIDERING APPLICATIONS FOR ADMITTANCE FROM ELIGIBLE NON-VETERANS, SECONDED BY WASSON, MOTION CARRIED.

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS

Mr. Sarg reported that the previous Senate Bill No. 95 had been revamped as Senate Bill No. 48 and has been assigned to the Veterans Affairs Committee. The bill is concerning the exemption of military retired pay from State taxation.

Mr. Davila stated that House Bill No. 55 was on the House agenda today. The bill would authorize members of the Delaware National Guard or members of a reserve unit located within the State to be buried in a Delaware Veterans Cemetery regardless of their state of residency if they had served 20 or more years.

Chairman Morris stated that Representative Atkins resigned from all his committees. He was the House Veterans Affairs Chair and a replacement has not been appointed.

PERSONNEL

No report.

MONUMENTS & MEMORIALS

No report.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

No report.

ORGANIZATIONAL REPORTS

Carroll (MOPH) – Informed the Commission that Commissioner Magner underwent double knee replacement and is in the VA Hospital.

Ennis (KWVA) – Reported that they had their annual Convention on Saturday at the Sheraton. Bob Wasson was elected the second Vice-Commander for the KWVA and the new Commander is Russell Cunningham from Lewes. Both General Vavala and Senator Carper attended the convention.

Lank (MOWW) – Reported that Jack Hawkins is celebrating his 90th birthday next month.

BY-LAWS

Vice-Chairman Ennis stated that the By-Laws Committee met and made a few minor administrative changes. Every Commissioner received a copy of the By-Laws and since no additional comments or recommendations were made, they will be mailed to the Attorney General for approval.

MOTION BY SPITZFADEN TO ACCEPT THE BY-LAWS AS AMENDED, SECONDED BY LANK, MOTION CARRIED.

NEW BUSINESS

Chairman Morris informed the Commission that they have been officially invited as the Honored Guests for the Newark Memorial Day Parade on May 20, 2007. Mr. Davila is working out the logistics with Major Kelly.

ITEMS FOR THE GOOD AND WELFARE OF THE ORGANIZATION

Chairman Morris reminded everyone that there was a Steering Committee meeting next Wednesday at 2:00 pm. All Steering Committee meetings will be held at the Veterans Home.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: APRIL 24, 2007 (11:00 AM)

**LOCATION: Robbins Bldg, 802 Silver Lake Blvd, Suite 100
Dover, DE**

ADJOURNED